

### **REMARKS**

The present amendment accompanies a Request for Continued Examination. In the previous Office action, the Examiner rejected pending claims 1, 6-8, 11, 13 and 14. Particularly, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 6-8, 11, 13 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Pat. No. 6,298,451 of Lin ("Lin"); and rejected claims 8, 11, 13 and 14 under §102(e) as being unpatentable over U.S. Pat. No. 6,564,131 of Hickman et al. ("Hickman").

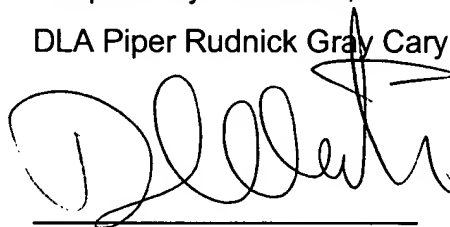
In the Office action, the Examiner noted that the although independent claims include both storage and metadata properties, the Applicants did not clearly state that the related services were separate in the claims. Pursuant to the Examiner's statements in this regard, Applicants have amended independent claims 1 and 8 to indicate that at least one instance of the services were separate such that the services could be independently scaled. None of the prior art discloses or suggests the claimed storage system including separate instances of metadata and storage services, which allow the services to be scaled independently of each other. The Examiner's early reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

**CONCLUSIONS**

For all of these reasons, Applicant respectfully asserts that all pending claims 1, 6, 7, 8, 11, 13 and 14 are in condition for allowance. The Examiner's early reconsideration is respectfully requested. If the Examiner has any questions, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's attorney at the following address or telephone number:

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Respectfully submitted,  
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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Alberti', is written over a horizontal line.

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